

Salt River Fire Department Operating Guidelines

Thermal Imaging Camera (TIC) Deployment

March 2003

202.05A

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PURPOSE

The purpose of this procedure is to identify the strategic and tactical approach for the deployment of thermal imaging cameras (also referred to as TIC's).

DEPLOYMENT

The early and rapid deployment of the Thermal Imaging Camera (TIC), while operating in an Offensive Strategy, may enhance the visibility in a visibly diminished atmosphere, thus increasing fire fighter safety and survival, as well as improving the survival potential of our customers.

The TIC can also be deployed while operating in a Defensive Strategy. It can provide the Incident Commander or Company Officer with valuable information during size-up. Early identification of structural compromise, fire location in the structure, e.g. attic, and identification of severely threatened exposures would provide valuable information when determining the strategy. This information would also aid in identifying key tactical positions/needs. By deploying a TIC to the exposures, information could be obtained as to the extent of impingement to the exposed structure, early identification of avenues of fire spread and possibly any hot spots, which could cause extension.

It shall be the responsibility of the Company Officer/Command to rapidly deploy the TIC in a visibly diminished atmosphere or in an atmosphere that may suddenly become visibly diminished.

PRIMARY APPLICATION

The primary use of the TIC for the fire department is for conducting search/rescue and crew accountability tasks. The use of a TIC can prove to be a useful tool during search and rescue tasks by reducing the amount of time it may take using standard search techniques. This will lead to a more effective and organized search, while quickly identifying the fire. By locating the fire quickly, we will better be able to determine our tactical priorities and rescue priorities (do we remove the victims from the fire or remove the fire from the victims).

The TIC will enhance the ability to maintain crew accountability by increasing the vision capabilities of the operator/Company Officer. This will ultimately lead to enhanced fire fighter safety while working in a hostile environment. **This does not replace the accountability tasks required of the captain and each individual operating on the fireground. We must stay together in complex situations and/or structures in order to enhance our survival.**

While the TIC may enhance the operation of the crews on the fireground, it is imperative to realize, that with any tool, there are limitations. TIC deployment into the operation should not propagate a sense of security. Crews and TIC operators must be aware that the TIC may malfunction and sole reliance on the camera is not prudent fire fighting. Additionally, it should not replace or violate the

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core of our experience, training, safety procedures, or standard fire fighting practices/principles.
As always, safety must be the top priority.